

WIC FACTS

WIC's Mission:

To safeguard the health of low-income women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are at nutrition risk by providing nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care.

Population Served:

The WIC target population is low-income, nutritionally at risk:

- Pregnant women (through pregnancy and up to 6 weeks after birth or after pregnancy ends)
- Breastfeeding women (up to infant's 1st birthday)
- Non-breastfeeding postpartum women (up to 6 months after the birth of an infant or after pregnancy ends)
- Infants (up to 1st birthday). WIC serves 45 percent of all infants born in the United States.
- Children up to their 5th birthday.

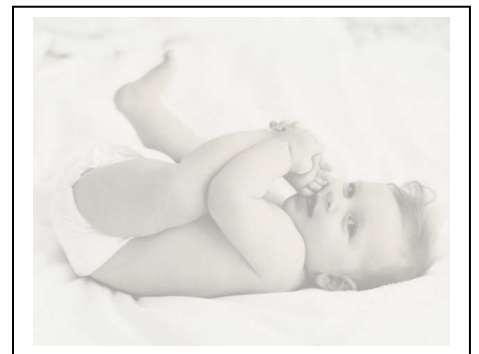
Benefits:

The following benefits are provided to WIC participants:

- Nutrition education and counseling at WIC clinics
- Screening and referrals to other health, welfare and social services
- Supplemental nutritious foods

Examples of where WIC services are provided:

- County health departments
- Indian health Service facilities
- Human Resource Development Council centers
- Hospitals
- Church Community centers
- Migrant health centers



Highlights of WIC Program effectiveness*:

- WIC reduces fetal deaths and infant mortality
- WIC reduces low birth weight rates and increases the duration of pregnancy
- WIC improves the growth of nutritionally at-risk infants and children
- WIC decreases the incidence of iron deficiency anemia in children
- WIC improves the dietary intake of pregnant and postpartum women and improves weight gain in pregnant women
- Pregnant women participating in WIC receive prenatal care earlier
- Children enrolled in WIC are more likely to have a regular source of medical care and have more up to date immunizations
- WIC helps get children ready to start school: children who receive WIC benefits demonstrate improved intellectual development
- WIC significantly improves children's diets

* References supporting these findings and additional information are available on the FNS WEB page www.fns.usda.gov/fns at FNS/About WIC/How WIC Helps.

MONTANA WIC FACTS

The Montana WIC Program was initiated in 1974 with 2 pilot sites at the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Health Department and Fort Peck Tribal Health Department. Since that time services have been expanded to all 56 counties. Services continue to be available to all eligible participants in Montana but due to limited Federal WIC funds, streamlining of clinics and services is taking place.

- The state contracts with 27 Local WIC Agencies including 7 Indian Reservations.
- 99 Clinic Sites in the state.
- 125 Local staff providing WIC services.
- 8 State WIC staff and 3 dedicated IT staff located in Helena.
- WIC services are provided to approximately 20,277 participants each month in Montana.
- The average monthly value of a food package is \$55.45.
- Over 1.15 million food dollars is spent monthly in Montana.
- Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Programs are offered through 5 Local Agencies.
- WIC Farmers Market Program is offered through 8 Local Agencies.
- 225 grocery stores in Montana accept WIC checks.
- Montana WIC's Breastfeeding rates are higher than the national average.

For more information about Montana's WIC program, go to www.FCHB.mt.gov and click on WIC/Nutrition OR call 1-406-444-5533.